Views of intellectuals on India's strategy in WTO

1526. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be plesed to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that the feeling amongst intellectuals is that "The solidarity of the South, and not expedient issue-based coalitions with USA/ EU, must be the bedrock of our strategy in WTO"; and

(b) how far we have been able to move towards its fulfilment and what steps Ministry of Commerce have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) A few intellectuals feel that "the solidarity of the South, and not expedient issue-based coalitions with USA/EU, must be the bedrock of our strategy in WTO". India has engaged in the ongoing WTO negotiations to ensure that its core concerns and interests continue to be adequately addressed as negotiations proceed from one stage to the next. India's approach to the negotiations is dictated by its national interests. For ensuring that our negotiating objectives find due refelction in the negotiated outcome, India has formed issue-specific coalitions with developing countries. Wherever there are common interests on specific issues in the WTO, India has worked with developed countries also.

India is a coordinator of the G-20, a developing country alliance, which is actively contributing to all aspects of the agriculture negotiations. India has also been a prominent founder member of the G-33, a group of 44 developing countries that emphasizes the need for special instruments, namely, the Special Products and the new Special Safeguard mechanism (SSM), to address their food and livelihood security and rural development needs of the developing countries. In the agriculture negotiations, India and Brazil representing the G-20 are members of the Five Interested Parties (Australia, Brazil, EC, India and US). Spearheaded by India, the G-33 has been making substantive contribution on the evolution of Special Products and the SSM.

In the Services' area, a Small Group, (co-chaired by India and US), a group of developed and developing countries, has been formed to provide impetus to Services' negotiations. In the negotiations on non-agricultural products' market access (NAMA), Argentina, Brazil and India have proposed

a formulation for reduction of tariffs, based on each WTO member's present bound tariff average.

On one of the most important outstanding implementation issue relating to the relationship between the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD and TRIPS, India has been instrumental in forming a group of developing countries (Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, Peru, Thailand, Venezuela, Zambia, Bolivia) for demanding that patent applicants should disclose the country and source of origin of any biological material or associated traditional knowledge used in their inventions, and the patent system should be supportive of the informed consent and benefit sharing arrangements that national laws may prescribe. Protection of intellectual property rights of private individuals should be supportive of the larger societal interests enshrined in the CBD.

India has also been working closely with broad developing country goupings, such as the Africa Group, the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, and the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to promote our common interests in the WTO.

Problems faced by fireworks industry

1527. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the problem facing fireworks industrialists due to complexities in the present rules for exporting fireworks production to other countries; and

(b) if so, Government's views and reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) This Ministry has not received any representation relating to the rules regulating the export of fireworks. Under the simplified Explosives Rules, 1983, a licence, in form 28 is obligatory for export of fireworks. The applicant is required to submit and application in form 11 alongwith fee of Rs. 150/- to the Chief Controller of Explosives. For export by sea, the licensee is also required to comply with the*requirements of International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code/Rules administered by Director General of Shipping. For export by